Parental Expectations and Conduct Policy

Key document details

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Introduction

At Steel River Academy Trust, we believe that parents are a valuable part of our communities, and we continue to promote positive communication, effective relationships and welcome any feedback we receive. This Policy is to provide clarification of the expectations of parents in continuing to support their child's safety and mental well-being as well as the safety and well-being of all our staff.

Aims and Responsibilities

The safety and well-being of children at Steel River Academy Trust is our priority and we ask that all of our stakeholders show commitment to our school policies and procedures which keep children safe whilst in school. These policies are all available on each school's website and paper copies can be requested from the main reception. This policy outlines expectations of parents and their contribution to keeping children safe, working together with school staff to ensure positive role modelling to children at all times in the shared goal of ensuring children are happy and safe.

This policy will be put into practice when communicating anything with parents. The Individual school Headteacher/Head of School are accountable for its implementation and review. This policy will be also available on each school's website. Regular and ongoing monitoring and review will take place to measure its impact and effectiveness.

Parental Behaviour and Conduct on School Premises

At Steel River Academy Trust, our school premises are a safe space for all. We expect parents and children to act appropriately at all times. Arrival and departure procedures are in place to ensure that children enter and exit school as securely as possible. Parents should arrive at school at the set times, no children or parents should be arriving at school more than 5-10 minutes before the start/end of the school day or staying on the school site after the end of the school day. Parents should only attend school after these times if agreed by appointment. This reduces health and safety incidents on the school site and any issues of conflict between children and parents.

If incidents have occurred in school between your child and another, please do not approach other children to resolve issues between that child and yours. Although you may feel angry, upset or frustrated by that child's actions it is unacceptable and inappropriate to speak directly to that child in this way. You may make that child feel frightened, vulnerable or intimidated and you would not want your own child to feel this way. Please come into school and speak to us so that we could resolve the issue by speaking to both children involved and any others as there are always two sides to every story and in a safe and secure environment it is more likely that the children will tell the truth about what has happened, and the issue can be resolved.

Equally please do not choose the playground to resolve issues with other parents. Although you may feel that is a good opportunity to see the other parent those feelings of anger,

upset and frustration can quickly lead into a confrontation (even unwillingly) and can cause the other parent to feel the same way. This behaviour is again unacceptable and inappropriate particularly as it may be in front of your own and other children and can cause them to feel scared and anxious. Confrontations of this kind can often become physical and therefore you may increase the risk of harm not only to yourself but other children and this will lead to police intervention if it occurs on school property. We may then request that you do not access our premises again – as is our legal right. Please remember to come into school and speak to us so we can arrange an opportunity for you to discuss your concerns, perhaps even with the other parents involved in a calm and controlled environment so there is no risk of harm to yourself or to others. **(Please see appendix 1 which outlines unacceptable behaviours in our schools)**

If as parents, you observe any of the above behaviours including parents behaving inappropriately towards their own children please inform us immediately.

<u>Conduct Towards Staff</u>

The Trust takes a zero-tolerance approach to any aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour (including threats of violence) towards any member of staff. These kinds of behaviours have a negative impact on our hardworking and dedicated staff and can significantly contribute to periods of absence as well as decisions to resign from their post. This inevitably results in instability for our children while also affecting the smooth running of our schools.

We want all of our schools to be happy and safe places to be and it is essential that all staff children and parents communicate in a respectful and thoughtful manner to maintain positive relationships and to allow all issues to be resolved quickly and effectively in the best interests of all children. This includes:

- Clarifying a child's version of events with the school's view, without accusation, in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.
- Correct their own child's behaviour especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive behaviour or unsafe behaviour.
- Approach the school in an appropriate and calm manner to help resolve any issues of concern.

If you wish to speak to any member of staff in school, please use the appropriate channels and arrange confidential conversations at a time convenient to you and the relevant member of staff. Information shared between parents and staff at arrivals and departure times should only be short messages necessary for that school day. This again reduces any incidents of conflict and allows school staff to support children at the beginning and end of the day.

Actions the Trust may take to address aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards staff :

- Restrict access to school staff

- Warning letter
- Ban from school premises
- Reports to Police

All school staff will quickly end meetings with a parent/carer who is abusive, threatening or aggressive and may refuse requests for future meetings without the presence of a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Home School Agreement

We have set out a Home/School agreement **(appendix 2)** which specifies the responsibilities of staff, parents and children and how we should all conduct ourselves on school premises. This can be found at end of this policy

Social Media and Technology

At Steel River Academy Trust, we have a clear policy on online safety, social media and the use of technology in school (see Online Safety Policy) which sets out clear boundaries to our children about how to stay safe online both inside and outside of school. We ask parents to follow the same principles when creating boundaries for their children outside of school. For example, children are aware that they should not hold social media accounts until they are 13 years old and therefore when incidents occur between children under this age who hold these accounts it is difficult to instil boundaries and principles of safe use, if children are able to access this social media outside of school. Parents do have the choice to set their own boundaries based on their own child's competency online however, if then incidents occur it is the role and responsibility of the parent to take necessary action. School cannot take responsibility or resolve issues that happen online, outside of school when school expectations have not been followed. In these circumstances parents should seek support and advice from the police and notify school of any action taken.

As highlighted above issues may occur between your child and others but please do not use social networking sites as a medium to address the issues with either another child or parent. Comments that are written online can be misconstrued, hurtful and distressing and once written can be used as evidence in police investigations. To prevent a situation like this occurring please seek external support from the police and inform school of any incidents.

In line with this please do not use social networking sites to be critical of either the school or staff within the setting. If comments are made against the school or its reputation this becomes a legal matter both legal services and the site used will be contacted to remove the communication as soon as possible. If comments are made against individuals working within the school which causes that individual hurt, alarm or distress then under the Malicious Communications 1998 and Communications Act 2003 this becomes a criminal matter, and the police will be contacted immediately by the school.

Images and Photographs

Images and photographs create good memories for both adults and children. In school we have a clear policy and protocol of how we take images and store them of children

Therefore, we request that if parents/carers are taking an image using any mobile devices to please ensure that you take only photographs of your child unless you have the consent of the other parents. There are many parents who do not wish images to be taken of their child and there are legal reasons why some children cannot be photographed so please be respectful of this and our school policy. For that same reason those images should not be posted online. Images that are shared online become the property of the internet and the social networking site, open privacy settings will share your images with strangers and may in the future cause distress to your child because they were posted online. Please take this responsibility seriously.

Seeking Support for Issues Outside of School

At Steel River Academy Trust, we seek to work together with parents to support them and their children with any issues that may occur outside of school. Parents can seek to arrange a meeting with appropriate school staff to share confidential information or seek support. It is not appropriate to have these conversations with staff at arrival and drop off, nor is it appropriate for parents to request staff to reinforce home rules with their child. The school's responsibility is to the safety and well-being of the child. Any requests to support parents with issues outside of school will be supported but children and parents will be spoken to separately. School staff can not reinforce home rules or expectations with children because children need to view school staff as safe people and separate from their home life. School staff can offer support and strategies to parents in managing any issues outside of school, but they cannot be responsible for the parenting of any child. Any overlapping of these roles may cause children not to share information or seek support from adults in school as they may feel this results in additional sanctions for them. It is important that children view school and the staff within it as safe people who they can seek support from and feel secure in sharing information with.

Parental Attendance on School Trips

Where parents are requested to attend to support school trips and excursions we ask that parents follow our school expectations and use appropriate behaviour and language with children. Parents will be given a short briefing prior to the school trip in regard to their responsibility for children during the excursion. This will include any health and safety information and the risk assessment for the trip. We also request that parents inform us of any incidents whilst on the school trip regarding any children or adults.

Parental Complaints

There may be times when as a parent you are unhappy or dissatisfied with the school and we would wish to resolve that immediately through the appropriate channels. The school's Complaints Policy clarifies the correct procedures to make a complaint. We ask that parents follow this procedure and alert school immediately of any problems or complaints so that they can be resolved quickly. If parents continue to be dissatisfied then they should continue to follow the complaints procedure. We request that parents do not use social media to raise complaints with school or express their views online nor share information with other parents that may exacerbate the situation.

Summary

In conclusion as stated throughout the policy we will always work in partnership with all parents and carers and ask that parents continue to support us in keeping children safe and happy in our schools. If there are any policies you wish to access, they are all available on the school website, furthermore if any clarification is needed then please contact the school office.

Appendix 1

TYPES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment the Trust must insist that all parents, carers and visitors refrain from exhibiting the following:

- Disruptive behaviour or disorderly conduct which interferes or threatens to interfere
- with the operation of a classroom, office or any other area of the school grounds.
- Using loud/or offensive language, shouting, swearing, cursing, threatening, using profane language,
- attempting to physically intimidate, use of aggressive hand gestures, body language or displaying temper.
- Threatening to harm a member of school staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or pupil regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence.
- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Sending abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other
- written communications.
- Defamation of the school or staff character on Facebook or other social networking
- sites.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical
- punishment against your own child on school premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of their
- actions towards your own children.
- Smoking, vaping and consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs on school premises.
- Dogs being brought on to school premises with the exception of assistance dogs.

- Shouting, arguing or fighting with other parents

STEPS TO BE TAKEN IF AN INCIDENT OCCURS

Actions taken will depend on the severity of the situation. If the Headteacher or Governors feel the situation is serious enough, they will move immediately to step 3

STEP 1: VERBAL or FIRST WRITTEN WARNING
The Headteacher (or member of SLT) will speak to the person or persons perpetrating such an incident, privately. It will be put to them that such behaviour is unacceptable and an assurance will be sought that such an incident will not be repeated. If the Headteacher is unable to meet with the parent or they are not responding to contact then this will be done in writing. It will be stressed on this occasion that repetition of such an incident will result in further more serious action being taken. If the Headteacher has been subject to abuse this may be done by the Chair of Governors or CEO if appropriate.

STEP 2: FINAL WRITTEN WARNING
If a second incident occurs involving the same person or persons, the Headteacher will write to the adult(s) informing them once again that this conduct is unacceptable. As for Step 1, if the Headteacher has been subject to abuse this may be done by the Chair or Governors or CEO. NB: Any incidents of violent conduct would immediately proceed to step 4. At any stage, the school may report serious incidents of abusive and threatening behaviour to the Local Authority. The school has a statutory responsibility to report any racist or discriminatory incidents to the Local Authority (See Equality Policy). Any act of actual or threatened violence will be referred to the police immediately.

STEP 3: EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL PREMISES
If such an incident reoccurs or if an initial incident is considered serious enough, the Headteacher, (or chair of governors/CEO) would enforce an exclusion from school premises.

STEP 4: REMOVAL BY POLICE
If, following a decision to exclude a person from the school premises, that person persists in entering school premises, they may be removed by the police as a trespasser under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 and charged with an offence under the Public Order Act 1986. All parents, even if excluded from school premises, are not excluded from the rights to access to school and have a right to seek an appointment to speak to school staff about their child's educational progress.

If it is deemed that a parent or visitor is aggressive or regularly confrontational towards staff members, future meetings must be arranged in advance where they may be recorded for the protection of both staff member and parent/ visitor. However, all parents/visitors will be informed in advance if a conversation or meeting is to be recorded.

Home/School Code of Conduct

Parents/carers	Pupil	School
• Will treat all members of staff with courtesy, dignity and respect • Approach staff in a non-threatening manner and without accusation when raising concerns • Support the school in managing and bringing about improvements in their child's behaviour where necessary • Support school in helping their child to progress both socially and academically • Listen to and act upon concerns raised about your child from school • Ensure you respond to contact from school as soon as possible • Support the school to instil tolerance and respect in all pupils • Ensure pupils arrive at school prepared for their learning • Monitor children's use of social media and online gaming to prevent issues occurring and being brought in to school	• Will treat all staff, children and visitors with kindness and respect • Work hard in all lessons and always try your best • Show resilience and determination when work is tricky • Talk to an adult if you are worried or upset • Not hurt any other child in school by hitting or saying unkind things • Be honest and trustworthy • Listen carefully to all teachers and follow the school rules • Look after school equipment and take care of your own belongings • Represent the school positively when out on school trips and events • Use social media and gaming devices appropriately to keep yourself safe and avoid conflict with friends in school	• Will approach all parents discreetly and respectfully when addressing concerns • Will support parents to help their child with home learning • Will support parents to help improve challenging behaviours in the home • Will welcome parents in to the school and involve them fully in their child's education • Will listen to and act upon any concerns raised • Will ensure all children are listened to, treated kindly and respectfully • Will have high expectations of all children with regards to their learning and behaviour • Will strive to develop independence, resilience and a love of learning in all our children • Will strive to ensure children treat each other with kindness and respect